

I am concerned that relaxing the media ownership rules will reduce the sources of information available to me and to other citizens. Having diverse sources of news which compete and check each other for accuracy and completeness helps citizens find out more about what is going on. If citizens are to make informed decisions we need to know what is going on at the local and state level as well as at the national level. I doubt that large national companies, which are concerned mainly with profits, will give local news the attention that it deserves. If most television stations and newspapers come to be owned by a few media conglomerates, which are free to promote the views of their owners, since there is no fairness doctrine in effect, the citizens will get restricted amounts of information, possibly biased information. If the profit motive is too strong in the media industry, news gets superficial treatment and we get simplified sound bites rather than thoughtful news reporting.

I think more complete public discussion is necessary before any changes are made in media rules. The public needs to know all the facts and all of the proposed changes, and have meaningful opportunities to respond, before any decisions are made. Let us keep and enforce the present rules until there has been a proper public discussion, with full public availability of and access to the information on this issue. If you consider rule changes necessary, publish the proposed changes with supporting reasons, including the full information used by you to reach your conclusions, then let the public and our elected representatives consider, discuss, and render opinions before any decision is made to put the changes into effect.